

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

[65] In a network monitoring system, a plug-in module specifies how devices of that type should be discovered, including the directories or registries that should be examined for device references, how these directories should be examined, how the network should be probed for devices and how detected devices should be identified. Each plug-in module has one of a plurality of predetermined standard interfaces that allow the discovery modules to operate with a single discovery framework. During a discovery operation for a particular device type, the discovery framework dynamically creates the discovery plug-in modules necessary to discover devices of that type and controls these modules via the standard interfaces to perform device type specific discovery.